mittee were at full liberty to employ any architect they might think proper in the first instance, or to select any design they chose, provided all the competitors were remunerated; but having issued an advertisement, on their honour as gentlemen, by which one individual only was to receive remuneration, they were no longer at liberty to decide, except as to the merits and suitability of the designs so submitted for their consideration. How far this has been complied with, I will leave to the opinion of any person who may have the opportunity of seeing the designs sent in. This may not, perhaps, amount to the fact of "obtaining goods under false pretences;" but it certainly is obtaining from ardent, aspiring, and talented members of the profession that which cost them much time and money, and deserves liberal encouragement, which I hoped it would have received from every intelligent and enlightened mind, and from this committee, in return for the very liberal response which was made to their public request. To issue an advertisement requiring so great a personal sacrifice, and not act up to the spirit of it, is certainly dishonest, if not illegal.—I send you my name. HONESTAS.

I beg leave to suggest that a meeting of architects should be called, to raise a fund for the purpose of trying the legal liability of these Ipswich worthies. It seems to me hardly fair, that in a question involving the interest of *all*, any *one* architect should have to fight the battle single-handed. I should be very glad to do all in my power, and I think the profession generally would do the same.

C. VICKERS.

I was one of those who were foolish enough to try for the Ipswich competition, and since the time I sent it in, I have heard nothing either of the committee's decision, or of my design, except what I have gleaned from your columns, in which I have just read of the very strange proceedings which took place. What strikes me as the strangest part of the affair, is, that though it was nominally settled a fortnight ago, all the designs have been retained for the especial benefit of the favoured one. I hope, sir, that, with your usual fairness, you will publish this communication, and the letters you may receive from others.

J. CLARKE, Architect.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

BY a work recently published, it appears that there were in operation, at the commencement of 1849, in different parts of the globe, a total length of 18,656 miles of railway, on which a capital of 368,567,000*l.* had been actually expended. Besides this, it is estimated that there were, at same epoch, in progress of construction, a further extent of 7,829 miles, the cost of which, when completed, would be 146,750,000*l.* Thus, when these latter lines shall have been brought into operation, the population of Europe and the United States (for it is there only that railways have made any progress) will have completed, within the period of less than a quarter of a century, 26,485 miles of railway; that is to say, a greater length than would completely surround the globe, at a cost of above 500,000,000*l.* sterling. To accomplish this stupendous work, human industry must have appropriated, out of its annual savings, 20,000,000*l.* for twenty-five successive years. —— It appears from a statement in *Herapath's Journal*, that the traffic returns on the following railways during the second half of the year 1850, were increased as follows:—Midland, 2¾ per cent.; Great Western, 4¾ per cent.; London and Brighton, 5¾; Caledonian, 6¼; London and North-Western, 6¾; Newcastle and Carlisle, 8½; Edinburgh and Glasgow, 8¾; London and South-Western, 9; Bristol and Exeter, 10½; York, Newcastle, and Berwick, 11¼; Ulster, 14; Belfast and Ballymena, 19¼; Great Southern and Western, 20; South Devon, 21; South-Eastern, 23½; York and North Midland, 25; Lancashire and Yorkshire, 25½; Lancaster and Carlisle, 28½; Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire, 29¾; Shropshire Union, 30; Leeds and Thirsk, 45½; and the Chester and Holyhead, 64½ per cent. On the Eastern Counties, a decrease in the traffic for the past half-year is shown of 16,894*l.*, or 4¼ per cent. —— The *Times*, in a leading article, in which it takes a hopeful view of the prospects of "our splendid railway system," now, as it were, completed, urges tourists to turn their sight-seeing eyes into the interior of their own native country, and thus to induce the publishers to finish their "Handbook of England," which is actually "not yet out," but from which they will learn what doubtless is better known to some foreign tourists than to many English ones, that "routes may be marked out which will give, within a month's tour, a dozen cathedrals equal to almost any in Belgium, a dozen noblemen's seats, with fine collections accessible to the public, besides parks, ruins, rural scenery, natural curiosities, historical monuments, and curious manufactures, to almost any extent." With such tours, as plainly marked out as those in the continental handbooks, we shall soon, the Editor thinks, have our tourists consenting to take at least one holiday in three in their native country: and to this we earnestly respond—so may it be. The excursion system, at least, has taken root, and will, itself, easily stretch into tourist temptations. But innkeepers as well as railway companies, must overhaul their charges, and no better epoch of such an era can possibly present itself than this present *year* ONE of international and industrial motion, mixture, and amalgamation. The opening of the more mature moiety of the nineteenth century is an epoch which peculiarly recommends itself to such considerations with all amongst whom its past moiety has introduced such a wonderful system as that of the railway. Cheap charges are essentially necessary to the full expansion of railway and wayfaring profits in such an age.

PROPOSED ENLARGEMENT AND DECORATION OF THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON.

THE AMERICAN ART-UNION.

AT the annual meeting of the American Art-Union, held on the 20th ult., Mr. Cozzens, the president, in the course of his opening address, when alluding to current topics of interest to lovers of art, said—"It has been determined to enlarge the Capitol at Washington to an extent commensurate with the increased necessities of the legislative department of government. It is understood that no plan as yet has been adopted for these alterations; but they will undoubtedly be contracted upon a scale and in a style worthy of the grandeur of the nation. It is greatly to be desired that they should be made the occasion of a systematic encouragement by Congress of the higher departments of art. These new halls and corridors to be prepared for the assemblage of the representatives of the most powerful republic that ever existed, should be resplendent with all the graces which painting and sculpture can add to architecture. The picturesque history of the first settlements of the different States, the heroic deeds of our armies, the labours and exploits of border life, the great councils which have originated important civil changes,—all these should be illustrated by the broad canvass and the frescoed walls; while the marble should symbolise the richness and extent of the national domain, the majestic progress of civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and the generous hospitality which opens wide the portals of the country to the poor and distressed of all creeds and languages. The erection of the new palace of Westminster has afforded to the British Government an opportunity of bestowing the most substantial encouragement upon Art—an encouragement which has resulted in a great improvement of public taste and the development of artistic skill. It is not to be doubted that a similar display of liberal and enlightened policy would produce the same results in the United States, and that not only the general standard of taste would be raised, but artistic genius and ability brought to light which might otherwise have remained for ever undiscovered. This subject has already attracted the attention of the artists of New York, and they are taking measures to bring its importance distinctly before the notice of the National Government.

The report of the Society sets forth that the number of members during the present year is 16,310, and they have placed the sum of 81,550 dollars at the disposal of the committee of management.

Of this amount, 16,225 dollars have been devoted to the production of six engravings, by American engravers, from pictures by American artists.

The sum of 8,009 dollars has been devoted to the publication of the *Bulletin*, a monthly art-journal, designed to aid in advancing the interests and promoting the objects of the American Art-Union. Of this work, 113,500 copies have been published during the year, and, accompanied by 227,000 original etchings and woodcuts, have been placed in the hands of all the members.

The committee have purchased, during the year, 424 paintings, 20 bronze statuettes, and 6 bronze busts of Washington, by American artists, at an aggregate of 43,120 dollars. They have also purchased 50 copies of outlines, by Washington Allston, 450 medals, and 60 proof impressions of the large engravings from two of Trumbull's paintings.

PATENT PRESSURE FILTER.

WE inspected, a day or two ago, a new and very ingenious filter, termed by the inventor a *pressure* filter, patented recently by Mr. James Forster, of Liverpool. The filter consists of a small globe, of a peculiar silicious sand-stone, hollow in the inside, and contained in a metal jacket. When this compact, but extremely simple, apparatus is screwed on to the service-pipe, the water is forced through the stone globe by the ordinary pressure from the main, and comes out perfectly exempt from all foreign bodies, and as clear as crystal. The action is mechanical, and it admits the water to flow through with such rapidity that it can be fixed permanently to the service-pipe, in place of the usual brass cock. There are two taps attached, one of which draws the *filtered* water from the *interior* of the stone globe; the other, the *unfiltered* water from the *exterior*. When the unfiltered water is drawn off for scouring or other purposes, it thoroughly cleanses the exterior of the filter from all mechanical impurities which may have collected on the surface, and by this means the filter is always kept sweet and clean. The apparatus is so formed as to allow of the sandstone globe to be readily detached from its exterior casing, and chemically purified by the most simple and ready means. This filter has received the marked approval of the authorities at Gwyder-house. A very complimentary allusion is made to it in the Blue Book of the Sanitary Board, which has just been published. Referring to the action of water on lead, when this metal happens to be mechanically diffused in pure water, at page 246, appendix 3, the report says, "One of the best preventives I have seen, is Forster's Patent Pressure Filter, which, although calculated to deliver the largest quantities, yet for domestic use need not occupy more space than the usual ball-cock of a cistern. Apart from its compactness, I have found that this filter completely arrests the action of lead, where, for the purposes of experiment, I have caused its oxide to be mechanically diffused in water." Now that we are becoming so much alive to the necessity of having water at least mechanically pure, this filter presents the readiest means of accomplishing this most desirable object that we have yet seen. But although so easily applicable for a domestic supply, the patentee assures us that the extension of his principle on a large scale will entirely supersede the use of filtering beds, and be constructed and worked at less than one-half of the cost, irrespective of the saving of land which is now used by the water companies for that purpose.

BIRMINGHAM SOCIETY OF ARTISTS.—Sir Charles L. Eastlake has accepted the office of President of this association.

THE NEW BRIDGE AT BATTERSEA.—During the last few days from twenty to thirty men have been busily employed in sawing timber and preparing piles to sink in the river, preparatory to beginning operations for the erection of the proposed and long-talked of suspension-bridge between Chelsea and Battersea.

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